



News Release

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2017 Michigan Reads! Program Features Book by Award-Winning Author

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LANSING – A rhyming, rollicking children’s book about a toad in trouble and anxiety stuck on a road in a load of gum of the bubble variety has been named as the featured title of the 2017 “Michigan Reads! One State, One Children’s Book” program, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) announced today.

Bubble Gum, Bubble Gum is authored by Lisa Wheeler, a Michigan resident, and illustrated by Laura Huliska-Beith (Little Brown and Company, 2004). Wheeler is the award-winning author of more than 35 children’s books including *Even Monsters Need to Sleep* (2017) and the popular *Dino-Sports* series. Her awards include: American Library Association Notable Children’s Book, the Parents Choice Recommended Award, and the Society of School Librarians International Honor Book.

“Reading can be fun and entertaining while teaching children at the same time, as shown by *Bubble Gum, Bubble Gum*” State Superintendent Brian Whiston said. “Having all children reading at grade level by the end of third grade remains one of our top priorities.”

In the book, readers wonder what happens when Toad gets stuck in gum melting in the road, and are called upon to join in the adventure to help free Toad and friends, using teamwork, from their sticky predicament.

“The Michigan Reads! program this year offers an exciting, tongue-twister of a story about working together,” said State Librarian Randy Riley. “*Bubble Gum, Bubble Gum*, is a fun way to engage children in the love of reading.”

The Library of Michigan’s (LM) “Michigan Reads!” program is devoted to increasing early childhood literacy and pre-reading readiness. Programming, events, and author visits are scheduled at schools and libraries statewide during “March is Reading Month.” The program launches Monday, March 6, at the Delta Township District Library.

The “Michigan Reads!” program is modeled after the “One Book, One Community” concept and is designed to emphasize the importance of shared reading practices with babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and young school-age children. These practices set the stage for fluent reading achievement in children as they enter school.

The program is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Consumers Energy Foundation, and partners with the Library of Michigan Foundation. With support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the LM will provide a hardcover copy of the book and programming materials to all public libraries, elementary schools, Head Start and Great Start Readiness programs across the state.

“Michigan Reads!” provides librarians, early childhood educators, parents, and caregivers with ideas to help children develop literacy skills through play-based activities. Since its inception in 2004, the program has aimed to promote the value and benefits of reading early and often to children; to encourage family bonding through reading; and to increase awareness and usage of Michigan's libraries as excellent resources for learning.

More information about “Michigan Reads!” – including dates and locations of author visits and materials for parents, teachers and caregivers – is available at www.michigan.gov/michiganreads.

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The Library of Michigan – Michigan’s official state library agency for more than 185 years – is part of the Michigan Department of Education. To learn more, visit www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan.

*Attached please find a cover photo of the book.